

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Committee: **Budget - *Personnel***

Date: **August 27, 2009**

Committee Members Present:	Others Present:
Supervisors Geraghty	Frederick Monroe, Chairman
Belden	Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services
O'Connor	JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services
Champagne	Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
Kenny	Supervisor Bentley
Sheehan	Supervisor Goodspeed
Merlino	Supervisor Pitkin
Taylor	Supervisor Thomas
Committee Member Absent:	Supervisor VanNess
Supervisor Stec	Rich Kelly, Personnel Officer
	Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Geraghty called the Budget Committee meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

The Committee commenced with a review of the Human Resources 2010 Budget Request, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. Mr. Geraghty noted that Todd Lunt, Director of Human Resources, was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Geraghty advised the Human Resources, Code A.1435, reflected a 2010 Request of \$112,572 as compared to the 2009 Appropriation of \$116,123, a decrease of \$3,551.

Mr. Goodspeed suggested the elimination of the Human Resources Department, thereby realizing a savings of \$116,123 and to return everything to the way that it was prior to the Department being created.

Mr. Champagne asked Rich Kelly, Personnel Officer, to take a position on that recommendation. Mr. Champagne added that the Department was created because Civil Service and Human Resources had two distinct responsibilities that went along with each Office. He further stated that in the time that Mr. Lunt had been with the County, employees had felt that they had an advocate in their corner.

Mr. Sheehan expressed his opinion that he did not think the Department should be eliminated and he believed Mr. Lunt was doing good work. Mr. Kenny reminded the Committee members that the Human Resources (HR) Department was created because the Civil Service Office used to do all the work and it was too much work for one office. Mr. Kenny added that when the HR Department was created, he never thought that an Assistant would be included in that Department. He suggested that the Assistant position in the HR Department be eliminated.

Mr. Taylor apprised that although he did not know when Mr. Kelly would be retiring, he believed they should be working toward one department handling all personnel. Mr. Pitkin agreed and noted that the County Attorney handled most of the negotiations and disciplinary actions for the County; therefore, he said, the duties should be streamlined into one department. Mr. Champagne voiced his opinion that some of the issues handled by the County Attorney's Office had absolutely no right being there, many of which were administrative and personnel related matters. He recommended that an analysis be made of who did what and how much time was spent on such matters in order to determine the results. He further stated that Department Heads should be taught management strategies and that should be done by the Human Resources Department.

Mr. Goodspeed advised that prioritization was necessary for the County and high priority issues, such as road patrol, should be protected and the lesser priority items should be reduced. He concluded that in poor economic times he did not believe the County needed a Human Resources Department. He reviewed his times of employment with the County and noted that each time he was processed through the Civil Service Office within a matter of minutes, without any difficulties. He added that the HR Department was another layer that was created where there was no need for such. Mr. Goodspeed noted that he was not suggesting that any action be taken today; however, he said, the Committee members should seriously consider the recommendation. He reiterated that the County had functioned without a HR Department for over twenty years.

Mr. Geraghty expounded that many businesses had a HR Department; however, he said, the County's HR Department was not set up like a typical HR Department. He asserted that a good HR Department would be able to avoid a number of problems that the County had been suffering through. He further stated that the HR Department should be reformed to become a true operating HR Department. Mr. Geraghty clarified that an effective and functional HR Department, especially in tough economic times, was more of a benefit to the County than to eliminate it. He supported continuation of the HR Department; however, he added, changes needed to be made.

Chairman Monroe entered the meeting at 1:12 p.m.

Mr. Kenny commented that the Director of Human Resources should be relocated to the Civil Service Office, which was comprised of two support staff that could be shared; thereby eliminating the need for an Assistant in the HR Department.

Mr. Kelly, in response to the original inquiry as to when he would be retiring, explained that he had planned to retire two years ago; however, he stated, the Mayor of the City of Glens Falls had contacted him and requested his assistance with the City's Civil Service Department. He asserted that the City had four Personnel Officers in less than three years. He acknowledged the fact that new staff did not always know where to go to obtain answers; whereas his Office had always been able to provide answers to questions, due to his years of experience. Mr. Kelly added that the HR Department was an evolving department. He remarked that many places that did not have HR Department's in the past, now did. He further stated that prior to the creation of the HR Department, he had to serve the Civil Service Department and at the same

time he had to work as a labor representative to try to resolve issues versus disciplinary hearings. He concluded that there was a demonstrated need to continue developing the HR Department.

Mr. Pikin questioned Mr. Kelly's feelings as to the idea of sharing support staff between the Civil Service and HR Departments. Mr. Kelly replied that the Director of HR should be consulted to provide his opinion. Mr. Kelly also noted that he did not have a secretary, he had two professionals that worked with him, one involved with examination administration and the other in job classifications; and he added that the Director of HR may need someone of a more secretarial nature.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to table the 2010 Human Resources (A. 1435) Budget Request until a later date.

Continuing the budget review session of the meeting, Mr. Kelly distributed a handout outlining the Civil Service 2010 Budget and the Budget Worksheet Report, copies of which are on file with the minutes. He reminded the Committee members that every year for the past few years, he had run out of overtime by June. He voiced his concern for this year, noting that with the addition of the administration of Civil Service for the City of Glens Falls, he would again be out of overtime. He added that prior to taking over the administration of Civil Service for the City, he had taken steps to assist with his budget, such as requesting assistance in consolidation from Senator Little and Assemblywoman Sayward; he requested that Glens Falls extend all their existing eligible lists for the maximum period of four years in order to avoid those examinations; and added a number of clerical series examinations whenever he had staffing. Mr. Kelly stated that he was proud that they had not brought in outside monitors at additional expenses to administer examinations.

Chairman Monroe requested clarification as to what had happened with the City of Glens Falls. Mr. Kelly explained that the City got out of the Civil Service business in January of 2009 and by law, the County had to absorb the City's administration of Civil Service. He asserted that meant that the County had to perform the testing for the Glens Falls Police Officers and Glens Falls Firefighters, both of which included physical agility tests and medical examinations for each candidate prior to them being certified for appointment.

Mr. Belden apprised that a zero percent increase in budgets had been requested of all departments, and the Civil Service 2010 Budget Request reflected a \$3,000 increase. Mr. Kelly responded that the increase was due to the CSEA salary increases which he had no control over.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the costs of administering examinations.

Mr. Kelly apprised that in the past he had transferred funds within different codes to offset the overtime costs. Mr. Geraghty noted that a realistic overtime budget had never been appropriated and that needed to be changed. He recommended that \$6,000 be budgeted for overtime. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, reported that currently the Civil Service overtime budget totaled \$5,500.

Mr. Belden recommended that Mr. Kelly try to reduce the Civil Service budget further and report back to the Committee. Mr. Kelly countered that the bottom line was he would have expended their overtime budget before the end of 2009, as he has every prior year and he could not predict the amount of expense that would be incurred with the City of Glens Falls. Mr. Geraghty said Mr. Kelly should increase the overtime code and reduce the Contractual Expense code in an effort to achieve a zero percent increase in the 2010 Budget Request.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously to table the 2010 Civil Service (A.1430) Budget Request until a later date.

Mr. Champagne questioned if it were essential for the entire Budget Committee to meet again to review the budgets that had been tabled, or could the Budget Officer conduct those meetings and Mr. Geraghty advised that he would meet with those departments whose budget requests had been tabled.

There being no further business to come before the Budget Committee, on motion made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Champagne, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk